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National Security Decision Memorandum 142

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Attorney General
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency

SUBJECT: Presidential Guidance on Mutual and Balanced
Force Reductions and a European Conference

As a result of the discussion at the December 1 NSC meeting, the President has directed that the following guidance be followed in consultations with our Allies on the issues related to Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions and preparations for a European Conference.

After considering the discussions at the meeting, the President has concluded that we are not prepared for definitive decisions with respect to MBFR or CES and that our general approach should be to proceed slowly while developing consensus within the Alliance on positions which clearly maintain our security.

It should be stressed to our Allies that the principal criterion for judging any MBFR proposals must be maintenance of Western military security. This will be the U.S. position in Alliance consultations on preferred MBFR models that would serve as the basis for negotiation. U.S. representatives should develop a maximum consensus on this principle.

At this time, the U.S. cannot support any single approach to reductions. We should urge the Allies to continue analysis of possible reduction

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models. Meanwhile, we should complete ongoing analysis and undertake further studies of asymmetrical models that emphasize limitations and reductions on Warsaw Pact offensive capabilities. We should also complete a study on options dealing with nuclear weapons and pursue further work on collateral constraints.

Our Allies should be told that the U.S. supports the concept of a sequential approach to negotiation similar to that proposed by the FRG. This approach should be applied to further analysis of MBFR models.

In Allied consultations, U.S. representatives should provide reassurance that we will not negotiate bilateral reductions with the USSR.

Until the Brosio mission to Moscow has been completed, the U.S. cannot support other efforts towards MBFR negotiations. While we would consider alternatives to the Brosio mission, if it proves unacceptable to the USSR, it remains essential that an exploratory phase similar to that authorized for Mr. Brosio be undertaken before any multilateral negotiations.

European Conference

We should insist that the final Quadripartite Protocol on Berlin be signed before agreeing to any multilateral preparations for a European Conference. Following the signing of the Berlin Protocol, the U.S. should urge a meeting of NATO countries at the Deputy Foreign Minister level to coordinate a common approach to the issues that may be raised by the other side before going into preparatory talks.

At present, Western preparations on substantive issues are insufficiently developed to enter into multilateral East-West contacts. The U.S. will be prepared to contribute to the work of the Alliance on substantive points by submitting more concrete proposals for Western consideration. In particular, security issues (other than MBFR) that might be topics in a Conference will be given more emphasis.

The U.S. has no interest in a conference in 1972 and all preparatory work within the Alliance and with Eastern and other European countries should be geared to this consideration.

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The U.S. does not wish to alter its current position of keeping MBFR and a European Conference separate.

Burdensharing

The U.S. should continue to stress to its Allies the importance of additional European force improvements meeting the objectives set by NSDM 133. MBFR should in no way conflict with the force improvements developed under the AD-70 programs; these two concepts must be complementary.


Henry A. Kissinger

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